

CHALLENGE *DETROIT*



2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Developing diverse, innovative, community-minded leaders through intellectual giving since 2012.

www.challengedetroit.org



COLLABORATION & GROWTH

The 2023-2024 program year marked another year of successful community collaboration and individual growth for Challenge Detroit and our Fellows. As our twelfth year of operations, we have now partnered with over 130 host companies and supported the placement of over 350 fellows in jobs across various sectors. We also celebrated a 12-year economic impact of nearly \$19 million to our local economy. Meet these companies in the “Our Companies” section of this report.

Beyond the employment aspect, our staff and Fellows have now served over 175 nonprofits through our challenge projects—working tirelessly with each nonprofit partner for months at a time to help them move forward on critical mission advancements that impact their community connection. This year our Fellows supported projects that focused on parks and public spaces, philanthropy and innovation, community and economic development, and youth empowerment which you’ll have a chance to read about in the “Our Challenge Projects” section of this report.

Our 26 graduating Fellows truly made an impact at their host companies and on these projects bringing rich diversity to the program and the community. With varied backgrounds, skills and expertise, they joined us from our local area and across the country, all with a passion for Detroit. Read more about them in the “Our Fellows” section of this report.

And of course we could not have done it without you. Thank you, for being part of our Challenge Detroit community, believing in our work, and supporting our mission. Challenge Detroit isn’t one person, one company, one organization, but rather a community; one that you are a part of.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

How We Make An Impact.....	6
The 2023-2024 Cohort	8
The Fellows.....	9
Our Host Company Partners.....	13
Our Challenge Projects	17
#1 Parks & Public Spaces	19
#2 Philanthropy & Innovation	25
#3 Economic & Community Development	31
#4a Youth Entrepreneurship	35
#4b Youth Development	41
Leadership Development.....	48
The Challenge Detroit Team.....	51
Donor Recognition & Thanks.....	53

“ ”

“Challenge Detroit was an invaluable experience that allowed me to interact with the city of Detroit on a level I never would have before. Being able to hear from prominent community leaders and members has taught me that building a sustainable mission driven career is possible and rewarding.”

JANE SUN, 2023-2024 FELLOW



HOW WE MAKE AN IMPACT

WHAT WE DO

- Attract and retain innovative talent by giving selected individuals a chance to learn and make an impact alongside longtime Detroiters.
- Portray Detroit and the surrounding region as a place people can live, work, play, give, and lead.
- Make incremental impact in the community throughout the year by addressing the issues and opportunities facing the city while building awareness of the momentum in Detroit to support the economy, culture and innovation as we develop the next generation of leaders, thinkers and doers through learning and leading by doing.

HOW WE DO IT

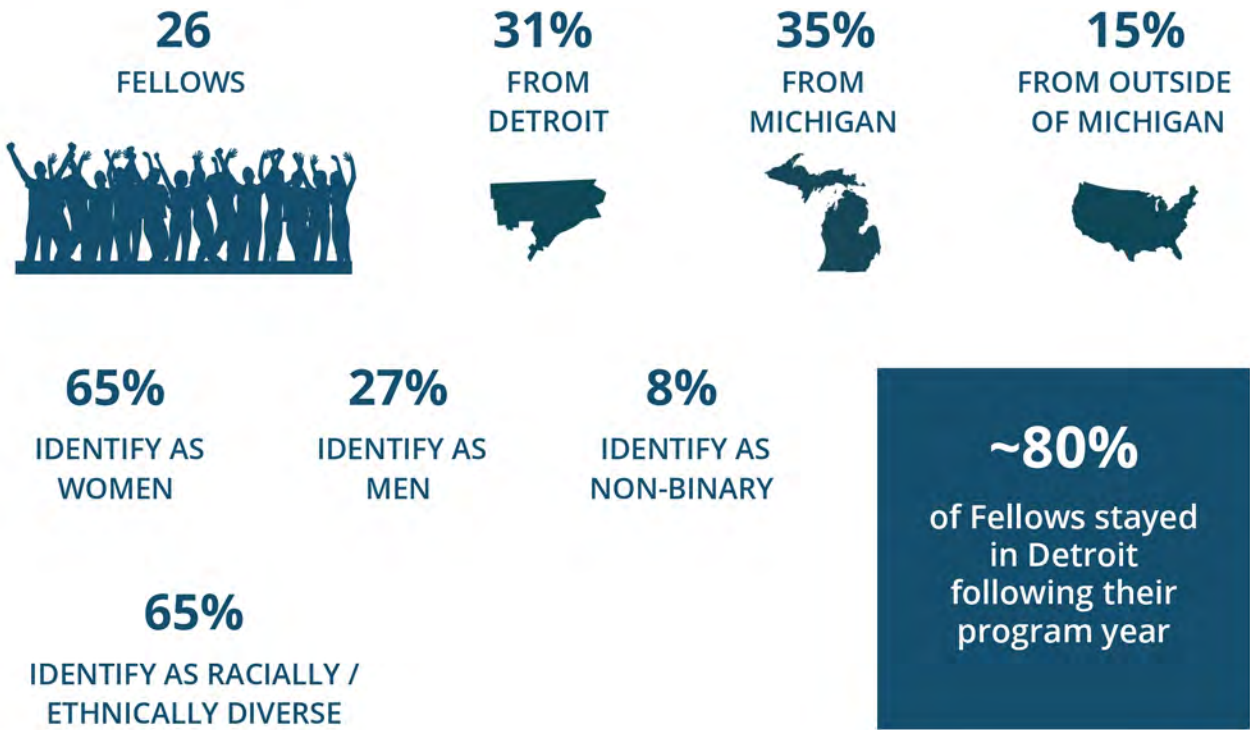
- Launch a local and national recruitment effort and robust application process raising awareness of Challenge Detroit and the impactful opportunities the city offers.
- Act as a platform to share balanced and positive messages about Detroit by showcasing the Fellows, companies and nonprofit partners that bring the program to life.
- Support job placement and stimulate the economy by partnering with top companies to serve as hosts to Challenge Detroit's Fellows.
- Further work with these companies to build partnerships that ultimately support the development of the local workforce while contributing positively to community impact efforts.
- Spearhead a robust leadership program centered around innovation and design thinking to support ongoing skill development that helps Fellows both in their jobs and also in their work with Challenge Detroit's nonprofit partners.
- Design multi-week team challenge projects to leverage the creativity, resources and intellectual capital of Fellows to positively impact operations, fundraising, programming, marketing and other critical functions of the nonprofits we serve.



OUR FELLOWS

Challenge Detroit attracts talent from Detroit and across the United States with a diversity of skills, experiences, and backgrounds. Together, they share a passion for the community and making an impact. Learn more about the cohort overall and the 26 Fellows here:

COHORT STATS



AREAS OF EXPERIENCE / KNOWLEDGE

Advertising, African American Studies, Architecture, Biology, Business Administration, Business Management, Communications, Community Action, Computer Science, Criminal Justice, Economics, Education / Educational Leadership: Higher Education & Student Affairs, Electronics, Engineering Technology, Entrepreneurship, Environment & Sustainability, Event Planning, Finance, Information Systems Management, Liberal Arts in Global Studies, Life Science, Marketing, Microbiology, Mortgages, Phlebotomy, Physiology, Policy, Political Science / Theory, Pre-Law, Psychology, Public Relations, Public Spaces Management, Romance Languages, Social Change, Social Relations, Social Work, Speech Communication Disorders, Supply Chain Management, Urban and Regional Planning / Urban Studies / Urbanism, User Experience

THE 2023-2024 / YEAR 12 FELLOWS



ANDREIA
INGES



BELLA
FERNANDEZ



CAROLYN
GONZALEZ-BRIGHT



CAIT
BILKOVSKY



CHENG
ZHANG



DENNIS
WHITE



ERIKA
LAW



GARY
HOPKINS



HENRY
ZHOU



JANE
SUN



JESSENIA
CRANFILL



JOLIE
HABASHY



JORDAN
FORD



JUSTINA
JEFFERS



KAMERON
BLOYE



KEKE
JORDAN



KELLEN
HARDING



KIM
SWINEHART



MADELINE
DARBYSHIRE



MALIK
GIBBS-OCCHOA



MARY
ZORAN



RAQUEL
SANTOS



SUMER
HAZIME



TASHA
JOHNSON



TORI
SILVESTER



VON
ELLIS





ANDREIA
INGES



“Becoming a Challenge Detroit Fellow, opens doors to countless opportunities for leadership, growth, and exploration. You get the chance to perform meaningful work, contribute to the community, and be in environments that advance your human and social capital. The experience is truly unique.”



BELLA
FERNANDEZ



“Challenge Detroit was the perfect move for me as a recent college graduate. I had the opportunity to take on various roles pertaining to both my educational background and my personal interests. Challenge Detroit is an excellent opportunity to gain the experience I need to thrive as a professional, while using my unique skillset to engage with the community of Detroit to help create lasting change.”



CHENG
ZHANG



“The Challenge Detroit fellowship has been a transformative journey, both professionally and personally. This program provided me with invaluable experience and a deep understanding of Detroit’s vibrant community. I am grateful for the support and growth this fellowship has fostered, and I am excited to continue contributing to Detroit’s future with the skills and insights gained through Challenge Detroit.”



JESSENIA
CRANFILL



“The Challenge Detroit fellowship has been an incredible journey, allowing me to connect with diverse community leaders and nonprofit organizations I never knew existed, expanding my network, and growing through human-centered design thinking and stepping out of my comfort zone.”



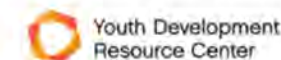
SUMER
HAZIME



“This past year has introduced me to amazing organizations throughout the city of Detroit, and I’ve had the privilege to connect with incredible people who have now become lifelong friends. I am deeply grateful for the support and mentorship from Challenge Detroit, my host company, Quinn Evans, and my fellow Fellows.”



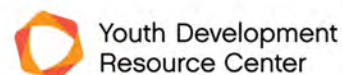
VON
ELLIS



“For me, being a part of Challenge Detroit means more than just a chance to advance my career. It is an opportunity to give back to my community, to be a catalyst for change, and to play a role in shaping the future of Detroit.”

2023-2024 HOST COMPANIES

Host companies commit to hiring and employing a Fellow for one year - working at their organization each week, Monday through Thursday, and providing them the opportunity to contribute in the community through intellectual service every Friday with Challenge Detroit. Participating companies are in a variety of industries, and range from small businesses to nonprofits to large corporations. These companies reflect the diverse Detroit business marketplace, and hold belief in the importance of retaining and attracting innovative, community-minded thinkers and doers. Along with the Fellows they employ, they're committed to philanthropic initiatives and being part of moving Detroit forward.



“

OneMagnify prides itself on being a force for innovation and improvement through technology and creativity. Partnering with Challenge Detroit allows us to extend this mission beyond our client brands and into the city we call home.

With every fellow we host, our knowledge pool deepens, and our commitment to making meaningful change strengthens. Each project is a step forward in enriching the Detroit community, and we're proud to be part of that journey.”

CRISTIN COSTANZA, VP - HUMAN RESOURCES
ONEMAGNIFY



“ ”

“Our partnership with Challenge Detroit offered so many positive connections and interactions. The Fellowship attracted top talent, filling a critical role on our team. The opportunities afforded to the Fellow throughout the year, from leadership development to community connections, deepened our network and allowed us to gain important perspectives about the community in which we serve. The Challenge Project presentations were inspiring, well organized and so thoughtful. CFSN felt like much more than an employer, but as a part of a larger network of amazing companies and fellows across the community!”

**ANDREA MEYER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CENTER FOR SUCCESS NETWORK**

OUR 2023-2024 CHALLENGE PROJECTS

Impact through Collaborative Projects

The heart of the Challenge Detroit program and a key driver of successfully attracting talent and impacting the community are the challenge projects. Every Friday, Fellows come together working in teams to generate innovative and meaningful solutions to pressing challenges and opportunities facing our Challenge Detroit nonprofit partners and the communities they serve.

The 2023-2024 Fellows participated in five cohort challenge projects, in partnership with Detroit nonprofit organizations to help further their missions. These projects focused on issues including parks and public spaces, philanthropy and innovation, community and economic development and youth entrepreneurship and youth development. The Fellows contributed their unique perspectives, skill sets, and innovative ideas to produce implementable recommendations and tangible, ready-to-go work products for the nonprofits. Our Fellows successfully delivered high quality work products and continued to add value for our partners. The projects build nonprofit organizational capacity by offering intellectual service and collaboration with top talent at no cost to the nonprofit.

Strategic Project Design and Effective Collaboration

Challenge Detroit has developed a robust needs assessment used to design projects that will most effectively leverage Fellows' talent while achieving optimal impact for a nonprofit partner. As a part of their orientation, Fellows learn about Detroit's neighborhoods, history and the policies that shaped the City to gain context. Fellows are then trained in the design thinking framework—a human-centered, creative, problem-solving approach—along with other skill training to prepare to work on projects together.

At the beginning of a project, Fellows participate in empathy based activities to understand the needs of the partner organization, individuals and community they are serving through each project. Fellows work in teams and use the design thinking framework and project management skills to execute their work, and collaborate with the nonprofit partner throughout the project. Challenge Detroit has refined the process, tools, and frameworks used to deliver on innovative team challenge projects.

Ready-to-go Deliverables

At the end of each project, the nonprofit partner is provided with a comprehensive set of ready-to-go deliverables ranging from marketing and fundraising campaigns to organizational strategies and assessments and beyond. The nonprofits then leverage and integrate these deliverables both internally and externally to move their work forward.



Youth Entrepreneurship



Parks & Public Spaces



Youth Development



Economic & Community Development



Philanthropy & Innovation





CHALLENGE #1: DETROIT PARKS COALITION

PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES



About Our Partner:

Detroit Parks Coalition (DPC) is an alliance of organizations that supports healthy, equitable and vibrant parks through fundraising, collaboration and advocacy.



Design Question:

“How might we connect more Detroiters to parks through improved outreach and stewardship?”



Project Partner Team:

Sigal Hemy
Yvette Bass
Rob Streit
Ian Solomon



About the Project:

Five teams of Fellows worked alongside the Detroit Parks Coalition staff, park coalition members and community stakeholders as they created deliverables focused on outreach and engagement for Detroit parks for various park user groups, from older adults and neighbors to youth, as well as park stewardship groups.



“

“The process working with the Fellows was rigorous and valuable. The detailed design process gave us outcomes focused on our park users while bringing the Fellows’ own creativity and energy to it.

I’m excited to implement! The work has been doubly useful – the deliverables will be able to find lots of different homes as we share them with park stewardship organizations as well.”

SIGAL HEMY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DETROIT PARKS COALITION



“ ”

“I’m really impressed with what the Fellows accomplished. I like the different and diverse perspectives. Great ideas, great deliverables that DPC will be able to implement in some capacity, and even share some of the Fellows’ recommendations at the Park Summit. These deliverables could also live as resources on our website.”

**YVETTE BASS, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS
DETROIT PARKS COALITION**





CHALLENGE #2: WAYNE METRO

PHILANTHROPY & INNOVATION



About Our Partner:

Wayne Metro Community Action Agency (WM) is a nonprofit organization serving approximately 75,000 low- and moderate-income residents throughout Wayne County with a mission to empower people and communities to be strong, healthy, and thriving in pursuit of eliminating poverty



Design Question:

How might we enhance program processes to increase opportunities for grantees and community members?



Project Partner Team:

Joan Brophy
TeQuion Brookins
Jordan Mulka
Sheryl Gray-Dodds

Sitara Govender
Stephanie Marchese
Latoria Glenn-Carr
Olga Turner



About the Project:

Three teams of Fellows focused on enhancing workforce development programs with the WM Innovation Lab, working alongside WM staff and community stakeholders, including program participants. Two teams of Fellows focused on participatory grantmaking and the Detroit Resident First Fund (DRFF) initiative, working alongside the Wayne Metro staff and community stakeholders, including Detroit Resident First Fund grantees.



“

“The Fellows rolled up their sleeves and dug into challenges that we'd not had the time to tackle. But they also brought their expertise, diverse experiences, and dedication to improving the lives of Detroiters to the work. Their work broadened the way we look at future work.”

**JOAN BROPHY, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
WAYNE METRO COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY**





“ ”

“The (Fellows were) amazing to work with. It was really inspiring to see how engaged and personally connected the team was in solving the issues for Detroit Resident First Fund (DRFF). We have already begun reviewing the deliverables and uncovering ways for us to implement them over time. They even showed me some new tools that I’ll be using in other projects going forward.”

TEQUION BROOKINS, DRFF CONSULTANT
WAYNE METRO COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY



CHALLENGE #3: JOE LOUIS GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



About Our Partner:

Joe Louis Greenway Partnership (JLGP) is a nonprofit whose purpose is making the Joe Louis Greenway a space that celebrates the strength and resilience of its surrounding communities through inclusive programming, ongoing beautification, and intentional community engagement.



Design Question:

How might we enhance local economic ties, offer youth-centric programs, and foster community through storytelling connected to the Joe Louis Greenway?



Project Partner Team:

Leona Medley



About the Project:

Three teams of Fellows worked on asset mapping to connect residents and visitors to the local economy along the Midwest Tireman, Highland Park, and Southwest Detroit section on the greenway. The Fellows on the Youth Programming team focused on creating programming for youth at the Midwest Tireman section of the greenway. Fellows on the Storytelling team focused on creating a sense of belonging and connection for residents and visitors to the greenway. All five teams collaborated alongside Executive Director Leona Medley, JLGP partners and community stakeholders to create deliverables.



“

As the new Executive Director of a start-up nonprofit, I'm brimming with ideas yet constrained by limited resources, both in terms of people-power and funding. Collaborating with Challenge Detroit has granted me access to 26 dynamic Fellows who are skillfully transforming my ambitious visions into well-crafted, actionable plans ready for implementation.”

LEONA MEDLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JOE LOUIS GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP





CHALLENGE #4: DETROIT FOOD ACADEMY

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP



**DETROIT
FOOD
ACADEMY**

About Our Partner:

Detroit Food Academy (DFA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that works to inspire young Detroiters (ages 10-24) through culinary arts and food entrepreneurship. From cooking delicious healthy meals for friends and family to facilitating complex conversations with community to developing artisan food projects from scratch to market, students learn by transforming their ideas into reality. Through this process, they grow as holistic leaders who are healthy, connected, and powerful to affect change in our communities and beyond.



Design Question:

How might we enhance youth entrepreneurship efforts at DFA?



Project Partner Team:

Kiki Louya
Le'Genevieve Squires
Diamond Dantzer



About the Project:

Three teams of Fellows worked alongside DFA to create a cohesive voice and brand for Small Batch, look at how to expand and streamline product lines, and design ways to enhance and strengthen success pathways for youth participating in the Small Batch program.



“ ”

“[DFA has been] thrilled to work with Challenge Detroit this summer to breathe new life into Small Batch Detroit, our social enterprise. Challenge Detroit has a reputation for excellence, and we know the finished product will be something we can be proud of for many years to come.”

**KIKI LOUYA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DETROIT FOOD ACADEMY**



“ ”

“This project collaboration with Challenge Detroit is going to bring tremendous value to our youth personally and professionally as they embark on their future success journey in Small Batch.”

LE'GENEVIEVE SQUIRES, DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DETROIT FOOD ACADEMY



“ ”

“Collaborating with Challenge Detroit has been inspiring. It's exciting to see our social enterprise with fresh eyes in a new space. This project [has brought] value to our mission's connection to Small Batch.”

DIAMOND DANTZLER, SMALL BATCH MANAGER
DETROIT FOOD ACADEMY



CHALLENGE #4: DETROIT UNITED LACROSSE

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



About Our Partner:

Detroit United Lacrosse (DUL) is a citywide youth organization dedicated to developing student athletes of character and integrity who will serve as positive members of the community. Detroit United Lacrosse works directly with youth from Detroit & surrounding neighborhoods to provide high-level lacrosse training, wellness education, and educational opportunities.



Design Question:

How might we support the growth of Detroit United Lacrosse in order to serve more youth?



Project Partner Team:

Summer Aldred
Christianne Malone



About the Project:

Three teams of Fellows collaborated with DUL to develop comprehensive fundraising efforts for this small organization, increase marketing and awareness of their youth programming, and design more academic and mentoring opportunities in the summer and year-round.



“

"The [Fellows'] work is invaluable and will help Detroit United Lacrosse to strategically prioritize the actions needed to scale our programs, outreach and engagement. We are a small but rapidly growing nonprofit, and this partnership [has been] catalytic as we sustain our mission and expand our impact in Detroit."

**CHRISTIANNE MALONE, CO-FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
DETROIT UNITED LACROSSE**



“ ”

“Challenge Detroit [has] helped us unlock the next chapter of growth in our organization's story. The Fellows [have] provided insight and tools that will help shape the future of our organization and will take our operations to the next level!”

SUMMER ALDRED, CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DETROIT UNITED LACROSSE



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A cornerstone of the program is leading and learning by doing. Fellows have the chance to hold leadership roles on challenge project teams, and also participate in leadership development programming. After each project, Challenge Detroit hosts a Leadership Friday, consisting of speaker presentations from various roles, industries and leadership positions, interactive panels and workshops, cohort bonding and skill development activities, as well as sessions focused on Detroit history, racial equity, culture and more.

This year's Leadership Friday programming included opportunities for reflection and personal development, bringing in alumni Fellows to speak on a variety of topics, a special Leadership day held at the Detroit Pistons Performance Center, visits to several cultural museums and community centers to learn and meet with leaders on-site, as well as our signature annual executive mentorship morning, along with team-collaboration activities and continued skill-building.





LEADERSHIP TEAM



DEIRDRE GROVES
Executive Director



SHELLEY DANNER
Program Director



PAULETTE BOLOFER - FULKERSON
Talent & Engagement Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRANK ANGILERI
Partner, Brooks Kushman

HAMSA DAHER
Executive Director, Small Giants

DEBRA DEBOSE
Retired Assistant Director,
Cranbrook Horizons Upward Bound

DAN KINKHEAD
Principal, Architect & Co-Director of
the National Urban Design Practice,
SmithGroup

GARRETT JACKSON
AVP, Talent Development Program
Manager, Huntington National Bank

BRUCE KRIDLER
Managing Partner and Founder,
Strategic Capital Group of Michigan

DOYLE MOSHER
President, Mosher Dolan, Inc.

BRIAN NUNO
General Manager - Home Services,
DTE Energy

PETER ROBINSON
President, Robinson / Jeffrey
Associates, Inc.

BILLY STRAWTER JR.
Publisher, BLAC / Founder, MILO

TYLER TENNENT
Attorney, Dawda Mann

JIM WORTH
Founder & CEO, Formcode Design
Group



DONOR RECOGNITION & THANKS

Challenge Detroit is thankful for the generous support from sponsors and donors that made this program year possible.

\$25,000+



**\$5,000 -
\$24,999**



**Doyle
Mosher**

**Frank & Maria
Angileri**

**\$1,000 -
\$4,999**



**Hamsa Daher
Bruce Kridler**

Peter Robinson

**\$500 -
\$999**

Gerald, Marcia & Shelley Danner
Debra DeBose
Todd Dolan
Gregory & Sharon Greene
Dan Kinhead
Brian Nuno
Tyler & Suzanne Tennent

<\$499

Diana Di Giacomo
Mark Farlow
Matthew & Deirdre Groves
Seth Haug & Nellie Tsai Family 
Ian Hogg 
Aaron Jason 
Jaylyn King 
Stephen & Susan Molina
Martha Moyer
Jarrett Waddy 

 denotes alumni



CHALLENGE *DETROIT*

 challengedetroit.org

 @challengedetroit  /company/challengedetroit

 /challengedetroit  @challengedetroit